Today's News - Tuesday, November 27, 2007

Ouroussoff minces no words re: 5 proposals for NYC's Hudson Yards: "This is not how to build healthy cities...As an ideal of urbanism, it is hollow to its core." -- Could an aerotropolis be Detroit's salvation? -- Worries about U.K.'s green belts being "concreted over" for housing. -- More good news coming from New Orleans (more is still needed). -- Phoenix to be home to first "solar city"? (another 300,000 people - just what it needs). -- Jacobs is impressed with London's "utter fearlessness about the new" (some Londoners might question that). -- Berlin: a mecca for starchitects and "Europe's coolest capital." -- Around Manhattan: Russell gives (mostly) thumbs-up to NYT HQ. -- Davidson finds New Museum "sexy and defiant." -- Hagberg's amusing take of the battle on Bond Street: it's Bambi vs. Godzilla. -- America's first mall gets a makeover doesn't impress Cheek. -- Detroit Institute of Arts expansion should have been a "big, glamorous statement" instead of "staid, cautious, almost self-effacing." -- A most amusing interview with Mendes da Rocha: "I am not a futile optimist." -- Blum gets the scoop on SOM's "King of Superstable 150-Story Structures." -- Szenasy wonders if today's deans are up to the task of educating the next generation. -- How could we pass up Scotland's Carbuncle Awards 2008: Plook on the Plinth, Pock Mark Award, and Zit Building Award.

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In Plans for Railyards, a Mix of Towers and Parks: ...five proposals...to develop the 26-acre Manhattan railyards are not just a disappointment for their lack of imagination...This is not how to build healthy cities. It is a model for their ruin... By Nicolai Ouroussoff -- Kohn Pedersen Fox/Arquitectonica/Robert A. M. Stern; FXFowle/Pelli Clarke Pelli; Helmut Jahn/Peter Walker; Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM)/Field Operations/Thomas Phifer/SHoP/Diller Scofidio + Renfro/Kazuyo Sejima + Ryue Nishizawa SANAA/Handel Architects; Steven Holl [slide show]- New York Times

Aerotropolis seen as key to reviving Detroit area: New economic hub would ease reliance on automakers...uniquely positioned to become one of the biggest such hubs in the nation. By John Gallagher- Detroit Free Press

Green Belt disappearing: An area...the size of central London has been concreted over the past 10 years. Now major companies and institutions are lobbying for thousands more acres of countryside to be turned over to housing.- Telegraph (UK)

In New Orleans, a Test of Mixed-Income Housing: Despite the havoc wrought by Hurricane Katrina around this city, one slice of the devastated housing market is showing resurgence.- New York Times

Arup to design world's first 'solar city' in Phoenix, Arizona: Mixed-use development for 300,000 inhabitants will rely on the sun for all daytime energy- Building (UK)

Embracing the Now: Visiting London for the first time in years proves revelatory...the city has an energy, a sense of possibility...utter fearlessness about the new...What I find surprising is the extent to which emerging London is built for public pleasure. By Karrie Jacobs -- Foster + Partners; Herzog & de Meuron; Marks Barfield- Metropolis Magazine

Shock and awe: In just 17 years the city of Berlin has used its tragic history to rebuild itself into Europe's coolest capital...has become a mecca for the world's architects... -- Gehry; Hadid; Libeskind; I.M. Pei/Eller + Eller; Renzo Piano; Stephan Braunfels; Richard Rogers; Sauerbruch Hutton [images]- The Times (Johannesburg)

Renzo Piano Floods Gray Monolith for New York Times in Gorgeous Light: ...he's pulled away the tower's skin to show its muscles and bones. By James S. Russell -- FXFowle; Gensler [slide show]- Bloomberg News

The Gray Ghost of the Bowery: An unsentimental valentine from the New Museum...an antidote to the generic luxury springing up around it...Sexy and defiant...challenges passersby to call it a freak... By Justin Davidson -- Kazuyo Sejima/Ryue Nishizawa/Sanaa [image]- New York Magazine

Bambi Versus Godzilla: On New York's Bond Street, two titans -- of architecture, development, and sexy street graffiti -- battle it out to determine whose style will be dominant...And the Winner Is... By Eva Hagberg -- Deborah Berke; Herzog & de Meuron [images]- Esquire magazine

Northgate Mall's face-lift: Woe is me: ...the freshening hasn't added any distinction to what debuted in 1950 as the nation's first mall...Like most old malls, it's an architectural mess, a chaotic collision of styles and look-at-me retail kitsch...The one flicker of design excellence is the 2006 Northgate Community Center, library and village green... By Lawrence W. Cheek -- Miller/Hull Partnership- Seattle Post-Intelligencer

Detroit's Latest Model: A Retooled Museum: ...what was needed for a city with a reputation for dust and vacancy was a big, glamorous statement; an architectural event; a thrill. The Graves design is staid, cautious, almost self-effacing. By Holland Cotter -- Paul Philippe Cret (1927); Michael Graves- New York Times

Paulo Mendes da Rocha: in step with the cosmos: The Pritzker winner and raconteur makes buildings dance...His b.s.-detector is always in the "on" position, wary of glib phrases, buzzwords, grand abstractions -- even if they're his own. [slide show]- Los Angeles Times

Engineer Bill Baker Is the King of Superstable 150-Story Structures: More than the notable projects he has already built...[his] main contribution has been a completely novel way of constructing them. By Andrew Blum -- Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM)- Wired magazine

Educating the Next Wave: Are the deans up to the task? Though the deans like to talk about educating citizen designers, it feels empty to me, and apparently to the students too. By Susan S. Szenasy- Metropolis Magazine

And the winners are...Carbuncle Awards 2008: Coatbridge Town Centre awarded the less-than-coveted title of 'Plook on the Plinth' for Scotland's Most Dismal Place; Pock Mark Award -
Silverburn Shopping Centre, Pollok: Worst Planning Decision; Zit Building Award - Springfield Quay, Glasgow: Most Disappointing Building [images, links]- Architecture Scotland/Prospect magazine

A Civic Gateway: Santa Monica Civic Center Parking Structure: The humble parking garage is humble no more with a bold design that makes it a sparkling destination point in itself - oh, it's LEED green, too. -- Moore Ruble Yudell Architects & Planners [images]- ArchNewsNow

-- Kyu Sung Woo Architects (KSWA): Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, Overland Park, Kansas
-- Erick van Egeraat Associates: Federation Island, Russia
-- Will Bruder + Partners: Nevada Museum of Art, Reno, Nevada

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